University of the Pacific
Scholarly Commons

University of the Pacific Theses and Dissertations

Graduate School

1951

A comparison of two methods of teaching English in selected classes of the same high school

Richard Louis Hughes
University of the Pacific

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/uop_etds

 Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation

Hughes, Richard Louis. (1951). *A comparison of two methods of teaching English in selected classes of the same high school.* University of the Pacific, Thesis. https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/uop_etds/1158

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of the Pacific Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact mgibney@pacific.edu.

College of the Pacific
Stockton, Calif

A COMPARISON OF TWO METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN SELECTED CLASSES OF THE SAME HIGH SCHOOL

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Education

College of the Pacific

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Richard Louis Hughes

June 1951

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE PAGE

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

During the last two decades much progress has been made in evaluating the relative efficiency of teaching methods, particularly those practices which are designated "experimental" as opposed to those called "conventional". Since nearly all of the experiments investigated broad integrated or correlated curricula, or specialized areas within a conventional course, there was relatively scant scientific evidence relating to experimental teaching methods used in the conventional high school English course, which today in most secondary schools includes written and oral composition, literature, grammar, and, to a limited extent, spelling.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study was to set up equivalent groups of conventional and experimental classes in English in order to test both groups with certain standardized tests before and after a definite period of instruction, and to evaluate the relative efficiency of the two teaching methods in light of the statistical evidence.

Importance of the study. Much criticism has been leveled at the experimental method of teaching English because of the relatively short periods of drill or practice

in the conventional fundamentals of English. The specific criticism of wasting valuable pupil time often has been aimed at English teachers who were attempting to achieve social goals not always included in the objectives of the conventional English curriculum. Very little, if any, of the above criticisms ~~have~~ has been supported by scientific data. In this study, an attempt was made to use a problems or topical approach in a conventional English course, including written and oral communication, literature, and grammar. It was hoped that a comparison of the data would point out the relative efficiency of the two methods in achieving the objectives of the conventional English curriculum.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Conventional. The term "conventional", whether used to describe teaching methods or curricula, was interpreted to indicate practices which for many years were accepted as standard procedures in the secondary schools of America. Two synonyms of "conventional" were "traditional, routine," in the belief of the Stanford Language Arts Investigation.[1] Wrightstone contended that conventional practices in English were well-known to most teachers, describing such activities

---

[1]Holland D. Roberts, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Grayson N. Kefauver, editors, English for Social Living (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1943), p. 11.

as

> . . . reading or literature, grammar, and composition. Each of these subjects is often taught separately. This method of instruction places an emphasis upon isolated skills and drills in the mechanics of oral and written language. . . The composition courses show a preoccupation with matters of form, style, and structure of the language. . . In literature and reading the conventional schools are also preoccupied with matters of form, style, and structure.[2]

Other evidence agreed with these interpretations of the term. Burton[3] emphasized that the conventional teaching of literary history and biography had been concerned too long with dissection and critical analysis. Hatfield agreed that too often conventional teaching practices overlooked the fact that

> Truly rich living, any real living, includes much more than such purely intellectual activity or (and) the practice of technical skill.[4]

Although the English curriculum of the Lodi Union High School was patterned to some extent after the basic plan

---

[2] J. Wayne Wrightstone, Appraisal of Experimental High School Practices (New York City: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1936), p.51.

[3] Dwight L. Burton, "There's Always a Book For You," The English Journal, 38:375, September, 1949.

[4] W. Wilbur Hatfield, chairman, An Experience Curriculum in English (A Report of the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 4, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, 1935), p. 11.

outlined by Hatfield,[5] the courses included therein were considered conventional in light of the evidence supplied by the school's English course of study.[6] According to the outline, reading was stressed in the ninth year, speech in the tenth, literature in the eleventh, and composition in the twelfth grade. Each of these strands ran through every year, with emphasis placed on the strand noted.

A breakdown of "Basic Skills for the Tenth Grade" revealed three basic strands: (1) Speaking, (2) Literature, (3) Writing. Sub-topics included such examples as (1) Objectives in speech-making, (2) Recreational reading, (3) Work-type reading, and (4) Aims of writing.

All evidence indicated that the English curriculum of the Lodi Union High School was based on the subject-matter approach, and could not be regarded as a topical or a problems approach. For the purpose of this study, the curriculum was classified as conventional.

Experimental. In this study the term "experimental" is used to designate a unit plan of organization based on the topical or problems approach. Wrightstone described this change of emphasis from the conventional approach as a shift

---

[5] Ibid., pp. 3-9.

[6] Richard L. Hughes, chairman, Basic Skills for English (mimeographed English course of study, Lodi Union High School, Lodi, California, 1942).

". . . from a more or less formal and isolated study of subject matter to a cooperative and coordinated function in the life of the pupil."[7]

Holding the same opinion, the Eight-Year Study emphasized the fact that

> . . . a shift has occurred. . . It is characterized by a change from studying subject matter as an end in itself, to defining and studying the problems which most concern boys and girls in our society. This emphasis has been called "the problems approach."[8]

Paralleling these statements was the conclusion reached by the Stanford Language Arts Investigation,[9] which maintained that the secondary school English curriculum must provide boys and girls with the means to solve their own problems.

The problems approach. Perhaps the most thorough investigation into the problems approach was made by the Stanford Social Studies Investigation,[10] at which time the

---

[7] Wrightstone, op. cit., p. 56.

[8] H. H. Giles, S. P. McCutchen, and A. N. Zechiel, Exploring the Curriculum (Vol. II, Adventure in American Education, Progressive Education Association, Commission on the Relation of School and College, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943), p. 119.

[9] I. James Quillen and Lavone A. Hanna, Education for Social Competence (New York: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1938), p. 20.

[10] Ibid., pp. 125-39.

group also probed into the chronological and topical methods of teaching. As far as this study was concerned, the problems approach was considered closely akin to the topical approach, with one important difference noted. With both approaches learning experiences were centered around a phase, an area, or a process,[11] but the problems approach always included a doubt. The Stanford Social Studies Investigation outlined two essential characteristics of a problem:

> . . . (1) it is an area of concern producing tensions which can be resolved only by a solution of the problem, and (2) it involves the choice of action from among two or more possible solutions.[12]

That these two approaches, problems and topical, were considered similar by some secondary schools was illustrated by citing several of the topics and their guide questions found in a course outline for senior social studies in the Lodi Union High School: "Recreation," "Marriage and the Family," "Labor Problems," "Crime," "Social Control and Public Opinion," "Toward Security," and "Institutional Control."[13] These topics in themselves gave evidence of using the topical approach.

---

[11] Ibid., p. 116.

[12] Ibid., p. 124.

[13] Evan Borst, chairman, Modern Problems (mimeographed senior social studies course of study, Lodi Union High School, Lodi, California, 1938).

Many of their guide questions, however, were expressed in the manner of the problems approach, as demonstrated by the following: "Should there be a law against the employment of married women in industry?" (from "Marriage and the Family");[14] and "Should collective bargaining be outlawed by law?" (from "Labor Problems").[15]

Because of the English pupils' lack of familiarity with the experimental approach and the time limitations of the study, it was impossible to use the problems approach exclusively, and at times the topical approach was substituted or allowed. However, this action in no way invalidated the data because both the problems approach and the topical approach were deemed sufficiently removed from the conventional curriculum to be designated experimental.

---

[14] Ibid., p. 8.

[15] Ibid., p. 12.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND RELATED STUDIES

> Something had to be done about the English curriculum: youth, society, and educational theory--all were changing faster than school practice. With the enforcement of compulsory attendance laws, all kinds of children were attending school and staying on to graduate. Scientific measurements were disclosing a wide range of differences among pupils previously considered alike. Educational theory was taking its color from the Dewey philosophy of education and experience. But even so, a one-sided battle was being waged between out-of-school life and in-school English.
> . . . . . .
> Yes, something had to be done about the English curriculum.[1]

Although Angela M. Broening wrote these critical remarks in 1939, she or any other competent educational theorist could reiterate the identical criticism today with complete justification. The trend toward interrelation of subjects in the secondary schools, although pronounced in theory, has been delayed in practice. One contributing factor to this delay has been the comparative newness of the experimental approach in education. Although evidence of correlation and fusion of secondary school subjects was discernible more than forty years ago,[2] most of the progress

---

[1] Angela M. Broening, chairman, Conducting Experiences in English (A Report of a Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 8. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, 1939), p.v.

[2] J. Wayne Wrightstone, Appraisal of Experimental High School Practices (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1936), p. 14.

toward unification has been made during the last twenty years.

Related studies in English. Statistics relating to studies probing the relative efficiency of teaching methods in the field of English were meager. Wrightstone,[3] in his experimental program, integrated social studies, English, and fine arts. English played a functional role, becoming a means to an end rather than the end result, a function to which it is too often relegated in the conventional curriculum. One significant result noted by Wrightstone,[4] was that the pupils in the experimental schools definitely surpassed equated pupils in the conventional schools in the literature tests. In reporting the results of the social studies, English, and art area of his experiment, he concluded that

> . . . evidence for the intellectual factors indicates that the experimental schools provide for equal and often superior achievement on the recall of facts and information, obtaining facts, organizing facts, and applying facts and principles . . . The various experimental practices for integrating and enriching the social studies, English, and art have not detracted from the usually measured outcomes; . . .[5]

Another significant contribution to the experimental aspect of the teaching of English was effected by the Stan-

---

[3] Ibid., pp. 128-43.

[4] Ibid., pp. 138.

[5] Ibid., p. 190.

ford Language Arts Investigation,[6] which utilized the combined efforts of teachers, administrators, and students to select and publish successful programs and practices. The reports were compiled by teachers of English, foreign language, and social studies. Of particular importance to the teacher of English was the summary of current theory and practice, plus a proposal for future activity.[7] In addition, two reports on the problems approach to the English curriculum provided interested teachers with actual classroom procedure in using that teaching method.[8]

Without compiling statistical evidence, the editors of the language arts' report maintained that

> Communication of significant content for some socially useful purpose provides both objective for the student and plan of attack for the teacher. Individuals, class, and teacher decide upon something to be done. Speech, listening, reading, and writing are then used in the most effective possible ways to carry out the plan agreed upon. Attention is directed to the mechanics of English when the need develops and when what is learned about them is immediately put to use by the learners.[9]

Another study which contributed valuable knowledge to the evaluation of teaching methods in the field of English

---

[6] Holland D. Roberts, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Grayson N. Kefauver, editors, English for Social Living (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1943), pp. 355-5.

[7] Ibid., pp. 3-27.

[8] Ibid., pp. 126-44, 243-60.

[9] Ibid., p. 23.

was recently reported by Kight and Mickelson,[10] who set up their experiment to evaluate the problems and the subject-matter approaches to the curriculum. They found that although the combined results showed that pupils learned more under the problem approach, the results were not always statistically significant.

Commenting upon the importance of the results to the several subject fields, the authors noted that

> In each subject field the difference is in favor of the problem presentation, but this difference is statistically significant at the one per cent level of confidence in only two of the subject fields, life science and social studies.[11]

It is important to note that in the two subject fields with which this study was concerned, English composition and English literature, the difference was statistically insignificant.

The report of the Commission on the Relation of School and College of the Progressive Education Association,[12] more popularly known as the Eight-Year Study, was an investigation conducted throughout most of the 1930's to devise

---

[10] Stanford S. Kight and John M. Mickelson, "Problem vs. Subject," The Clearing House, 24:7, September, 1949.

[11] Loc. cit.

[12] H. H. Giles, S. P. McCutchen, and A.N. Zechiel, Exploring the Curriculum (Vol. II, Adventure in American Education, Progressive Education Association, Commission on the Relation of School and College, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943), pp. 44-48.

sound methods of curricular experimentation in the secondary schools. One result noted in the Eight-Year Study was the disappearance of the conventional English program in the experimental curricula. In the new program, reading, writing, listening, and speaking became integral parts of the activity, and no longer were isolated segments of unrelated busy work.

Another innovation in the experimental curricula was the vital role played by the child and his area of interests. One aspect of this change of emphasis was an acceleration of the democratic process in the classroom, best demonstrated by a new encouragement of teacher-pupil planning.[13] This encouragement, plus the new attitude toward the problems of youth, caused Aiken to conclude that

> The emphasis here is upon the problems that young people face while they are still young people, upon the concerns of the high school students while they are still in high school . . . It is obvious that these present concerns of youth reach out into the future. He realizes that he is becoming what he is to be . . . None of the Thirty Schools would deny that preparation for the responsibilities of adulthood is important and that there certainly should be a long look ahead; but the business of living satisfactorily now at age seventeen is equally important, they say. Perhaps the best possible preparation for meeting the demands of adult life is to live successfully now at seventeen.[14]

---

[13] Wilford M. Aiken, The Story of the Eight-Year Study (Vol. 1, Adventure in American Education, Progressive Education Association, Commission on the Relation of School and College, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942), pp. 77-9.

[14] Ibid., pp. 234-8.

Related studies in social studies. Social studies often provided the areas of study in an integrated curriculum, although as the Committee on Correlation of the National Council of Teachers of English stated, "English becomes the pivot and binding element of any such curricular experiment."[15]

Two studies in particular were important from the standpoint of teaching methods. Oberholtzer's study of interrelation of subject matter, carried out under his direction in the Houston, Texas, schools during the early 1930's, emphasized the vital role played by problem-posing and problem-solving in providing more time for an expanded and enriched curriculum.[16] After studying the Houston results, the Committee on Correlation reported that though less time was spent on drills in the integrated curriculum, "the fundamental skills were equally well mastered."[17]

Significant also to this study was the investigation into the relative efficiency of three teaching approaches--problems, topical, and chronological--by the Stanford Social Education Investigation in 1941. Using junior and senior

---

[15] Ruth Mary Weeks, chairman, A Correlated Curriculum (A Report of the Committee on Correlation of the National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 5. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1936), p. 283.

[16] Ibid., pp. 234-8.

[17] Ibid., p. 238.

students in high school in its study, the Investigation concluded that

> The overall superior growth which the senior groups using the problems approach made in the behaviors evaluated, as compared with that of the students in the topical approach, and the growth made by the juniors using the problems approach in critical thinking, liberal attitudes, and academic interests warrant a more extensive use of the problems approach in social studies instruction and in general education.[18]

The study added that schools should make more use of the problems approach if American youth is to participate effectively in a democracy, though progress made by the groups using the topical and the chronological approaches justified their use when results warranted their continuance.[19]

Literature on related problems. Certainly a good share of the progress made by the teachers of English during the last fifteen years must be credited to An Experience Curriculum in English, a report of the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English. Much of the National Council's basic philosophy concerning the teaching of English stemmed from the commission's report, which became one of the most frequently quoted sources of

---

[18] I. James Quillen and Lavone A. Hanna, Education for Social Competence (New York: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1948), p. 179.

[19] Loc. cit.

information for many leading teachers of English, and not infrequently a rich source of inspiration. Since the philosophy held by the commission was so basic to all thinking in the field of English, the following statement of principles set the pattern for the experience curriculum:

> The place of English in this program (school curriculum) is obvious: to provide the communication (speaking, writing, listening, reading) necessary to the conduct of social activities, and to provide indirect (vicarious) experiences where direct experiences are impossible or undesirable. Perhaps no other subject gains so much as does English from the integration of the school with everyday life.[20]

Sheridan elaborated on certain phases of the experience curriculum when she urged that English teachers provide "... for equilibrium in a changing world, by considering life adjustment and reaching the souls of students. . ."[21] She called for all phases of the language arts to provide genuine and vicarious experiences to contribute to the student's ability to act independently and to face his own personal problems.[22]

A plea for courses embodying the fullest use of good reading, listening, speaking, and writing was sounded by

---

[20] W. Wilbur Hatfield, chairman, An Experience Curriculum in English (A Report of the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 4. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, 1935), p. 4.

[21] Marion C. Sheridan, "Equilibrium With Variations," The English Journal, 38:127, March, 1939.

[22] Sheridan, loc. cit.

Loban[23] if English teachers expect to help students with the manipulation of ideas necessary for the effective consideration of their problems.

Agreeing with the leaders in the field of English, the Eight-Year Study emphasized the interpretive importance of the English language when it declared that

> Clear--critical and reflective--thought demands an understanding of the role of language, and careful consideration of the way words work. . . Situations in which language in its varied forms must be considered are numerous and differ widely.[24]

While not stressing curriculum building, the staff of Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools, sponsored by the American Council on Education, undertook the project of developing ". . . new materials and techniques for improving human relations and for fostering intergroup understanding in the school and the community."[25] Certain themes considered vital by many consulting teachers were developed; their titles indicated their importance to high school students: "Patterns of Family Life," "Community Contrasts,"

---

[23] Walter Loban, "No Way Around," The English Journal, 38:263, May, 1949.

[24] Commission on the Relation of School and College, Progressive Education Association, Thirty Schools Tell Their Story (Vol. 5, Adventure in American Education, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943), pp. 751-2.

[25] Hilda Taba, director, Reading Ladders for Human Relations (Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools, Work in Progress Series, Revised and Enlarged Edition, Washington, D.C.; American Council on Education, 1949), Preface, p.v.

"Differences Between Generations," and "How It Feels to Grow Up." These were several of the areas in which high school students, becoming increasingly aware of group membership, found the treatment of problems which could be closely identified with their own.[26] The staff warned that the themes were not intended necessarily for discussion topics per se, explaining that their greatest value to some teachers might be ". . . as a means of finding stories or chapters that illustrate points pertinent to other issues under discussion in their classrooms."[27]

Students of English grammar and English usage in many cases have committed themselves to the side of the experience curriculum. Kaulfers contended that no scientific evidence has been offered to prove that ". . . sentence analysis, diagramming, parsing, or nomenclature-drill is of the slightest benefit in improving a person's own personal use of language."[28] Pooley[29] pointed out that the development of desirable attitudes rather than intensity of drill

---

[26] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[27] Ibid., p. 5.

[28] Walter V. Kaulfers, Four Studies in Teaching Grammar from the Socio-Psychological Viewpoint (Stanford University, California: The Stanford Bookstore, distributors, 1945), pp. 16-17.

[29] Robert Pooley, Teaching English Usage (The National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 16. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1946), p. 227.

determined improvement in language usage. Group reactions and responses, whether in classroom or out-of-class experiences, determine the purposeful use of language; and the speaker, or the writer, used his language to effect individual or group reaction.[30]

Democratic processes and group discussion were closely allied in certain classrooms. English teachers who have attempted some phase of the integrated curriculum, either cooperating actively with other fields or within the English area alone, have found an exciting method of developing effective democratic citizenship.[31] In addition to the acquisition of principles representing the democratic way of life, members of discussion groups became aware that problem solving involved frequently not only two, but several possible solutions.[32]

While stating the place of literature in the experience curriculum, Dora V. Smith[33] protested that in too few

---

30 Arthur G. Kennedy, English Usage (The National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 15. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1942), p. 43.

31 Murray A. Goldberg, "Developing Democratic Responsibility Through Discussion of Controversial Issues," The English Journal, 34: 66-71, February, 1945.

32 Lois Anne Dilley, "Discussions: A New Technique for the Classroom," The English Journal, 36:413-4, October, 1947.

33 Dora V. Smith, "Basic Considerations in Curriculum-making in the Language Arts," The English Journal, 37: 123, March, 1948.

instances was drama called upon to make its contribution to the program. As in the case of literature, drama frequently promoted intelligent consideration of personal and social problems. This contribution should be recognized and utilized to the fullest extent; its merit should be recognized in the whole pattern of the curriculum, rather than being relegated to a fringe area as an isolated segment.[34]

An experiment of interest to teachers concerned with the problems approach was reported in detail by Henry.[35] Becoming interested in the "colored question" and its attendant problems, the members of a high school English class made a real contribution to racial understanding in their community. In addition to their intense desire to communicate their ideas to their peers, the students concerned demonstrated an appreciation for the tools of communication. Here was an eloquent example of what Hatfield termed "a functional combination of the dynamic experiences of active life and the intellectual activities which have been teachers' chief concern."[36]

---

[34] Robert C. Pooley, "English in the Coming High School," The English Journal, 37:287, June, 1948.

[35] George H. Henry, "Our Best English Unit," The English Journal, 36:356-62, September, 1947.

[36] Hatfield, op. cit., p. 12.

Douglass[37] complained that the results of educational investigations during the past twenty years have had little effect on secondary school practices. He held hope, however, that the recent general education movement would stimulate greater progress in effecting desirable changes in the field of secondary education. The proponents of Education for Life Adjustment outlined their ideas of a sound educational procedure in English in the following summary:

> When we break with the idea that to be educated one must develop a superficial acquaintanceship with certain designated classics of literature, and that education means conforming to a single standard of usage, we shall have time in our English classes for activities that will contributed to a many-sided growth in all areas of life and life adjustment.[38]

In retrospect, much of the philosophy developed by teachers of English regarding teaching methods and approaches was based on opinion and/or theory, substantiated by relatively scant scientific evidence. It is not surprising, then, that many teachers were, and are, confused regarding the merits of the experimental and conventional approaches in English instruction.

---

[37]Harl R. Douglass, editor, Education for Life Adjustment (Douglass Series in Education, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950), p.v.

[38]Ibid., p. 108.

CHAPTER XII

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Several of the difficulties often confronted in an experiment of this nature were not present to complicate the method of procedure. Because pupils being tested attended the same high school, problems of community comparison, such as equivalence of general character, type of population, and socio-economic status, were minimized. The very limitation of the data to one school was advantageous, for under the circumstances such techniques necessary for the administering of the tests were carefully supervised. The selection of comparable teachers was facilitated by the absence of such variables as differences of salaries, methods of supervision, and extra-curricular demands.

Selection and comparison of student groups. Students at Lodi Union High School were placed either in college preparatory or regular English classes, the decision being based for the most part on some combination of the following criteria: I. Q. data; achievement tests; recommendation of counselors; request of English teachers; request or demand of parents; and request of the students. According to the 1947 survey of the curriculum of Lodi Union High School, the greatest distinction made between college preparatory and non-college preparatory, or regular, classes is that ". . . more attention is given the traditional prac-

tices of the study of grammar, of composition, and of classical literature in the college preparatory classes than in the regular classes."[1] The differences or similarities of the courses within the framework of the curriculum were not so significant, however, as the fact that students of English were naturally grouped according to age, grade level, and years of English taken. Students in the tenth and eleventh grades were selected for the study for several reasons: (1) a sufficient number of comparable classes was available; (2) the classes selected were more mature and better adjusted to the school and its curriculum than were the ninth grades; and (3) teachers of the classes chosen were willing to cooperate with the study. Data presented in Tables I-IV, pages 23-26, show the similarity of the groups selected to represent both teaching approaches, the conventional and the experimental.

The I.Q.'s, procured from the official records of Lodi Union High School, were obtained for the most part from the Terman-McNemar Test of Mental Ability, while the others were obtained from the California Test of Mental Maturity. However, since the correlation of the Terman-McNemar test with the original Terman Group Test of Mental Ability is

---

[1] T. W. Hart and L. H. Peterson, A Report of a Survey of Public Education in the Lodi Union High School District (mimeographed survey report, The University of California, Berkeley, California, 1947), pp. 56-7.

TABLE I

COMPARISON OF INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES IN ENGLISH

Groups	No.	Mean I.Q.	Standard deviation	Difference in mean	Standard error of difference	Critical ratio
Junior groups						
Conventional	89	97.56	12.69	.89	2.05	.43
Experimental	90	96.67	14.76			
Soph. groups						
Conventional	88	99.16	12.99	1.32	1.97	.67
Experimental	95	97.84	13.74			

TABLE II

COMPARISON OF INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS OF COMBINED GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES IN ENGLISH

Groups	No.	Mean I.Q.	Standard deviation	Difference in mean	Standard error of difference	Critical ratio
Junior and sophomore groups Conventional	177	98.36	12.86	1.09	1.43	.76
Junior and sophomore groups Experimental	185	97.27	14.26			

TABLE III

COMPARISON OF CHRONOLOGICAL AGE
OF GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL
AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES IN ENGLISH

Groups	No.	Mean	Standard deviation	Difference in mean	Standard error of difference	Critical ratio
Junior groups						
Conventional	89	17-2.82	8.53	.95	1.17	.81
Experimental	90	17-1.87	7.16			
Soph. groups						
Conventional	88	16-1.51	7.77	2.07	1.24	1.67
Experimental	95	16-3.58	9.07			

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF CHRONOLOGICAL AGE OF COMBINED GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES IN ENGLISH

Groups	No.	Mean	Standard deviation	Difference in mean	Standard error of difference	Critical ratio
Junior and sophomore groups Conventional	177	16-8.20	10.53			
Junior and sophomore groups Experimental	185	16-8.59	9.68	.39	1.06	.37

.91,[2] and since the correlation of the California Test of Mental Maturity with the Stanford-Binet is .88,[3] there seems little reason to doubt the statistical evidence obtained in Tables I and II. The data demonstrated that the groups were comparable at both grade levels as there was no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the I.Q.'s.

While the conventional and experimental groups were not so similar in chronological ages, the difference was not statistically significant in either instance.

Comparison of teachers. All four teachers who were asked to participate in the study expressed a friendly willingness to help, and each was assigned to the type of teaching for which he expressed a preference. Of the two teachers who were assigned to use the conventional teaching methods, one taught tenth grade students and the other taught eleventh graders. The same situation existed with the two teachers assigned to use the experimental approach. Each teacher faithfully carried out his assignments, completed his share of the study, and returned all necessary data. All of the teachers were experienced; each had at

---

[2] Oscar K. Burros, editor, The Third Mental Measurements Yearbook (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1949), p. 264.

[3] Ibid., p. 224.

least twelve years of experience; and each was judged above average in teaching ability by the administration of the school. Three of the teachers possessed master's degrees, and one needed only to complete his thesis for the same degree. Teaching loads were well matched, as the teacher-pupil ratio of the conventional group was 25.7 and that of the experimental group averaged 25.2. Non-teaching activities varied only slightly so that any variance was not sufficiently large to be educationally significant.

The conventional teaching method. Wrightstone[4] made the observation that after evaluating numerous conventional and experimental English curricula, he found that the differences between the two types were more in materials and teaching approaches than in major objectives. Teachers concerned with this study found that the broad objectives of both conventional and experimental groups were in many cases similar; both groups, for instance, were interested in the following aims: (1) ability to think critically; (2) skillful organization of thoughts; (3) clarity in stating ideas; (4) reading with speed and comprehension; and (5) appreciative and creative understanding of literature. This list was, of course, not complete, but it served to demonstrate

---

[4] J. Wayne Wrightsone, Appraisal of Experimental High School Practices (New York City: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1936), p. 129.

that the major objectives of both conventional and experimental groups are often similar.

Teachers using the conventional approach proceeded to divide the language arts activities into the various divisions of literature, grammar, oral communication, and written communication. This method placed emphasis upon isolated drills and exercises, particularly when these phases of language arts were taught separately, either in blocks or on separate days.

A typical week of the conventional approach might be as follows: Monday--literature; Tuesday--composition; Wednesday--grammar and sentence development; Thursday--reading in library (reasonably free student choice of material); and Friday--literature, spelling, grammar, or oral communication (any one or combination). In addition to being isolated, each of these component parts of language arts was likely to be subjected to over-emphasis of form, style, and structure at the expense of the intrinsic worth of its content.

In the curriculum of Lodi Union High School, oral communication is the strand emphasized in the tenth grade. "Basic Skills for Tenth Grade English," a section in the brief course of study for Lodi Union High School teachers of English, lists such main topics as (1) Speaking, (2) Litera-

ture, and (3) Writing.[5]

Under the main topic of "Speaking," several sub-topics listed are as follows: (1) Re-tell an exciting incident which happened during the summer; (2) A three-minute original talk on any subject; and (3) Description of some person in class. The main topic "Writing" includes such sub-topics as the recognition of independent clauses, dependent clauses, conjunctions, phrases, and the eight parts of speech.

Much the same pattern is followed in the section on "Basic Skills for Junior English," a guide for teachers of eleventh grade English students, with the exception that American literature is emphasized.[6] The main topics in this section are listed as (1) Study of American literature, (2) Emphasis on writing, (3) Study of grammar and correct English, and (4) Oral classroom work (once a month). The topic heading "Study of American literature" includes such sub-topics as (1) Study of early American documents, (2) Study of early American poets and writers, and (3) Keeping of a notebook on American literature. Several sub-topics chosen from the group listed under "Study of grammar and correct English" are (1) Study of the four kinds of sentences,

---

[5] Richard L. Hughes, chairman, Basic Skills for English (mimeographed English course of study, Lodi Union High School, Lodi, California, 1942), pp. 16-19.

[6] Ibid., pp. 22-23.

(2) Study of intransitive and transitive verbs, (3) Spelling used in conjunction with grammar (and spelling bees), and (4) Word study at intervals.

In following the suggested outline of study, teachers of the conventional program were allowed to choose either the daily assignment plan as listed previously under a typical week of the conventional approach or the block assignment plan which continued two, three, or more days. Observation of the teachers using the conventional approach indicated that both daily and block assignments were used interchangeably, depending on the factors involved in a specific assignment.

In both the tenth and eleventh years, the conventional approach appeared to place less emphasis on the oral communication aspect of the language arts program than any other phase listed in the teacher's pamphlet of basic skills. The most prominent use of oral communication, other than the usual question and answer procedure, was noted in the use of the oral book review, or summary, principally offered at the teacher's desk. It is true, however, that occasionally other uses of oral communication were employed, but the program was essentially as described. There were no evidences observed that indicated the use of tape recording, disc recording, or public address amplification in any phase of the program. The use of group discussion, either panel or round-table, was very limited. It appears reasonable to say that, what-

over the reason, the oral communication phase of the conventional teaching approach was the least developed of the various aspects of the language arts program.

The classroom reading program of the teachers using the conventional approach was based primarily on a teacher-selected short story, essay, biographical sketch, or novel. Too often the form of the work and the style of the author became the focal point of study at the expense of the intrinsic worth of the ideas expressed. Occasionally a short work was completed in one period; other times two or three periods were used, particularly if the teacher wished to correlate a written assignment with the reading. Novels were read either two or three days a week in class, plus home reading, for several weeks, or read continually until completed, with various related assignments interspersed among the daily readings. Observation disclosed only minor correlation with oral and written activities other than supplying topics for themes or paragraphs.

Written English occasionally was an outgrowth of literature, as stated in the preceding paragraph, particularly when the reading material suggested several thought-provoking ideas for themes or written paragraphs. At other times, teachers using the conventional approach depended on their own ability to stimulate interest on the part of their students. Teachers frequently were preoccupied with the mechanics of written communication, failing to encourage

sufficiently evidence of critical thinking demonstrated by the students. Several subject areas successfully employed are suggested in "Basic Skills for Tenth Grade English,"[7] and include (1) The letter actually to be sent someone, (2) Creative or imaginative topics, (3) Constructive topics, and (4) Completion of an unfinished story. Motivation for themes or paragraphs varied, but frequently included oral or silent reading, or visual materials such as magazine illustrations or photographs; films, filmstrips, transcriptions, radio broadcasts, or guest speakers rarely were used to motivate written communication.

During the last few years, grammar and language usage were taught at Lodi Union High School primarily through the use of workbooks and single worksheets arranged in the workbook manner and style, with teachers using this material about two periods per week. "Grammar" and "language usage" are interpreted here in the same meaning that Kennedy intended when he wrote that "usage is the practice of the art of speaking and writing, and grammar is the scientific presentation of certain facts pertaining to inflectional forms and syntactical uses of words."[8] The workbook and

---

[7] Ibid., pp. 16-21.

[8] Arthur G. Kennedy, English Usage, (The National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 15. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1942), p. 2.

worksheet material, for the most part, was entirely unrelated to any other class activity, providing drills largely by and for themselves. The teachers using the conventional approach occasionally selected examples of the students' own work for classroom study, but the major portion of practice material was provided by block assignments of drills which lacked intrinsic value themselves and which were unrelated to any other classroom activity.

The only purpose of the preceding description of the conventional approach to teaching language arts is to present in more detail its practice in the English department of Lodi Union High School. Teachers vary in their teaching methods and procedures regardless of the teaching method or approach used; hence, the preceding account describes accurately only the general procedures used in the conventional approach to the teaching of language arts during the term of this study.

The experimental teaching method. As stated previously, the major differences between the conventional and the experimental curricula lay in the teaching method or approach. In setting up the experimental program for this study, the teachers concerned agreed to cooperate with the pupils in setting up a long-range, broad program based primarily on student interest. The experimental approach, then, was based on (1) a long-term sequence; (2) integration of sub-

ject-matter, skills, and student experiences; (3) a psychological approach to subject-matter through student interest; and (4) the finding of new sources of materials. A brief summary of one project indicated the experimental factors involved in the study.

To place one junior experimental class on a democratic basis and to teach parliamentary procedure, the teacher suggested that the class elect a student chairman to lead the discussions aimed at planning the next unit of work. After two or three periods of discussion, the class decided (1) on a list of problems or topics, (2) to work in committees of about five members, (3) to have each committee hold a panel discussion, and (4) to write and edit a book about each topic selected.

The procedure of each committee followed a similar pattern. Each selected a chairman and then a topic or problem from the list, which included such topics as (1) "Is the Hot Rod a Menace?" (2) "Family Relationships," and (3) "Personality Development." After the general topic for the committee was chosen, individual members of the committee chose various phases of the general topic for their individual sub-topics. The individual's responsibility was to develop his sub-topic within the framework of the general topic. For instance, if the general topic was "Personality Development," the individual's sub-topic might be "Boy-Girl

Relationship in High School," or "How to Live With Adults." The chairman had no topic; his position was one of leadership. His responsibilities included the introduction of the general subject, the chairmanship of the panel, the editorship of the book, and finally the summarization of the important contributions to the subject made by the members of the committee.

The traditional formal classroom procedures were minimized by the impact of the experimental program. As student needs arose, they were met as effectively as possible. For instance, when the members of the various committees were seeking research material, part of a class period was devoted to a study of the Readers' Guide. Then students were sent on their own responsibility to the school library and/or the city library. While students were still seeking material and were beset with problems of organization, films were shown demonstrating visually how to study, how to outline, and how to increase reading speed and comprehension.

Certain written evidence was necessary to indicate the work in progress; hence outlines, either sentence-type or topical, were requested by the chairman. At this time, a period was devoted to a class discussion of and practice in outlining. Thereafter, the teacher worked with individuals or with committees on problems of outlining.

The culmination of the various activities presented many opportunities for the psychological approach to subject-

matter. Before the date set for the panel discussion, the class decided to use a public address system for the discussion. A system was available in the radio studio; therefore arrangements were made to transfer the class meeting place to the studio for the duration of the discussions. The use of the public address system was an added incentive for speech improvement. Spirited discussion often took place when the panel discussion was opened to the audience; hence speech training was not limited to the presentation of a formal topic. The development of books, with each member of the committee writing a chapter, produced many interesting results. Naturally art work flourished, but pride in a completed chapter, neatly written and clearly stated, also was very evident.

During the planning of these student activities, the members of the class worked extensively in the libraries, reading for information and for vicarious experiences. The librarians, in many cases, helped the students to find material, both fiction and non-fiction, that contributed to their understanding of problems similar to those facing students in high school, and that helped solve, at least in terms of their own understanding, experiences as yet vicarious.

To say that the previous explanation was a complete report of one of the experimental projects would be a misstatement. The explanation does indicate, however, the type

of instruction which was used by the teachers who practiced the experimental approach.

Evaluation instruments used. In order to carry out the purpose of the study, it was necessary to select evaluation instruments which would measure progress made in one semester toward objectives commonly associated with the conventional English curriculum. These objectives usually include the following aims of instruction: (1) ability to use correct grammar; (2) mastery of acceptable sentence structure; (3) skill in organization of thoughts; (4) ability to read effectively; and (5) understanding and appreciation of literature.

Three instruments were selected to evaluate these broad objectives:

(1) Cross English Test, Forms A and B

(2) Iowa Silent Reading Tests, Forms Am and Bm

(3) Cooperative Literary Comprehension and Appreciation Test, Provisional Forms R and T

These three tests were selected because of their availability and appropriateness. When the first two tests were administered, Forms A and Am were not available in sufficient numbers; hence Forms B and Bm were given as pre-tests and Forms A and Am were administered as end-tests. Progress in grammar and sentence structure made by the groups was measured by the Cross English Test. The silent reading

program was evaluated by the Iowa Silent Reading Tests, which measured such progress as (1) rate of reading with comprehension, (2) directed reading for facts, (3) poetry comprehension, (4) word meaning, (5) sentence meaning, (6) reading for organization of ideas, and (7) reading to locate information. Knowledge and appreciation of literature were measured by the Cooperative Literary Comprehension and Appreciation Test.

Although many instruments of evaluation were available for gathering data on the progress made in conventional English classes, the tests used in this study seemed to evaluate adequately the broad objectives usually associated with the conventional English curriculum.

No experimental tests were used or devised for this study, nor were efforts made to evaluate critical thinking or social attitudes developed by the groups during the course of the study; such evaluation was not within the province of this investigation.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

Evidence collected for this study showed the progress made in English during one semester by junior and sophomore student groups equated as to intelligence, chronological age, and semesters of study in the subject. Teachers who participated in the program were comparable in training, experience, class load, and competence. With student and teacher variables held as constant as possible, the only seemingly apparent variable present was a difference of teaching methods, one set of teachers using the conventional approach and the other set using the experimental approach.

Statistical significance. When used in the results of this study, statistical significance was defined as a gain in mean score on an end-test of one group over the end-test mean score of the same test made by the equated group, which gain if divided by the standard error of that difference yielded a critical ratio of 3 or more. Garrett[1] noted that it is customary for educational statisticians to accept a critical ratio of 3 as indicative of a significant difference. Hence, since a critical ratio of 3 indicates that there is only about 1 chance in 1000 that the difference is

---

[1] Henry E. Garrett, Statistics in Psychology and Education (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1945), p. 213.

greater than 0, it is a virtual certainty that the difference of 3+ is statistically significant. The following conclusions were drawn on the relative merits of the conventional and experimental methods of teaching English based on data collected from the three standardized tests used in this experiment.

The Iowa Silent Reading Tests. In testing such skills as (1) rate and comprehension of silent reading; (2) comprehension of words, sentences, paragraphs, and articles; and (3) ability to locate information, the end-tests at the junior level indicated no significant difference in growth. The pre-tests of this group demonstrated even less difference, as only .20 separated the pre-test means (Table V).

A somewhat greater difference of growth was demonstrated by the sophomore groups in the end-tests, but the difference was not statistically significant (Table V).

Tables VI and VII, pages 43 and 44, summarize the data on the silent reading scores made by the combined groups, with the junior and sophomore conventional classes compared with the junior and sophomore experimental classes. The pre-test mean scores of the combined groups indicated that a difference of only .20 in favor of the conventional classes separated the two groups. The similarity of the growth made by the combined groups was indicated by the end-test scores, which showed a difference in means of .39 in favor of the

TABLE V

COMPARISON OF GROWTH IN SILENT READING MADE BY GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES DURING ONE SEMESTER AS MEASURED BY IOWA SILENT READING TESTS, FORMS Bm AND Am*

Groups	No	Mean		Standard deviation		Difference in end-test mean	Standard error of difference	Critical Ratio
		Pre-test	End-test	Pre-test	End-test			
Junior groups								
Conventional	89	75.94	79.86	11.25	11.54	1.23	1.83	.67
Experimental	90	75.74	78.63	11.90	12.59			
Soph. groups								
Conventional	88	74.02	78.51	10.78	10.60	3.77	1.72	2.19
Experimental	95	73.89	82.23	8.94	12.42			

*The scores presented in this table are scaled scores. Tables furnished in the Manual of Directions, Iowa Silent Reading Tests, were used to convert raw scores into scaled scores.

TABLE VI

COMPARISON OF SCORES IN SILENT READING MADE BY COMBINED GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES AT BEGINNING OF SEMESTER AS MEASURED BY IOWA SILENT READING TESTS, FORM Em*

Groups	No.	Mean Pre-Test	Standard deviation	Difference in mean	Standard error of difference	Critical Ratio
Junior and sophomore groups Conventional	177	74.99	11.06	.20	1.14	.18
Junior and sophomore groups Experimental	185	74.79	10.53			

*The scores presented in this table are scaled scores. Tables furnished in the Manual of Directions, Iowa Silent Reading Tests, were used to convert raw scores into scaled scores.

TABLE VII

COMPARISON OF GROWTH IN SILENT READING MADE BY COMBINED GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES DURING ONE SEMESTER AS MEASURED BY IOWA SILENT READING TESTS, FORM Am*

Groups	No.	Mean End Test	Standard deviation	Difference in mean	Standard error of difference	Critical Ratio
Junior and sophomore groups Conventional	177	79.11	11.10	.39	1.25	.31
Junior and sophomore groups Experimental	185	80.50	12.64			

*The scores presented in this table are scaled scores, tables furnished in the Manual of Directions, Iowa Silent Reading Tests, were used to convert raw scores into scaled scores.

College of the Pacific
Stockton, Calif.

experimental classes. Although the combined experimental group made more growth during the semester, the change was not great enough to be statistically significant.

The Cross English Test. An appraisal of the growth made in the ability of the junior groups to use correctly the common forms of English expression indicated no significant difference between the conventional and the experimental classes (Table VIII). The conventional classes achieved a greater growth, but the difference was not statistically significant.

Experimental classes at the sophomore level again made more progress than the conventional groups, but evidence supplied by the end-test indicated that the growth was not of educational significance (Table VIII).

The students in the combined junior and sophomore conventional classes made a higher pre-test mean score than did the combined experimental classes, but the difference was not important educationally (Table IX, page 47). End-test mean scores made by the combined groups showed a difference in means of .33 in favor of the experimental classes (Table X, page 48). Although the comparison between the two tests indicated that more progress was made by the experimental combined group, the growth was not significantly greater than that scored by the conventional group.

TABLE VIII

COMPARISON OF GROWTH MADE BY STUDENTS IN CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS IN ENGLISH USAGE DURING ONE SEMESTER AS SHOWN BY SCORES ON CROSS ENGLISH TEST FORMS B AND A

Groups	No	Mean		Standard deviation		Difference in end-test mean	Standard error of difference	Critical Ratio
		Pre-test	End-test	Pre-test	End-test			
Junior groups								
Conventional	89	117.00	127.93	19.52	16.90	3.65	2.40	1.52
Experimental	90	115.33	124.31	16.77	16.40			
Soph. groups								
Conventional	88	114.39	119.96	18.50	18.87	4.35	2.75	1.58
Experimental	95	113.22	124.31	19.10	18.59			

TABLE IX

COMPARISON OF SCORES IN ENGLISH USAGE MADE BY STUDENTS IN CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL COMBINED GROUPS AT BEGINNING OF SEMESTER AS SHOWN BY CROSS ENGLISH TEST, FORM B

Groups	No.	Mean Pre-Test	Standard deviation	Difference in mean	Standard error of difference	Critical Ratio
Junior and sophomore groups Conventional	177	115.70	19.06			
Junior and sophomore groups Experimental	185	114.25	18.04	1.45	1.95	.74

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF GROWTH IN ENGLISH USAGE MADE BY STUDENTS IN CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL COMBINED GROUPS DURING ONE SEMESTER AS SHOWN BY SCORES ON CROSS ENGLISH TEST, FORM A

Groups	No.	Mean End-Test	Standard deviation	Difference in mean	Standard error of difference	Critical Ratio
Junior and sophomore groups Conventional	177	123.98	18.35	.33	1.89	.17
Junior and sophomore groups Experimental	185	124.31	17.56			

The Cooperative Literary Comprehension and Appreciation Test. The difference in growth indicated by the end-tests of the literary test was not significant at the junior level. Both groups made only slight progress; the conventional group gained slightly more than the experimental classes (Table XI).

Greater progress was made by the experimental sophomore classes, but the difference in growth between the conventional and experimental groups was not significant (Table XI).

The students in the combined junior and sophomore conventional classes indicated some superiority over the combined experimental group in the literary comprehension and appreciation pre-test mean scores (Table XII, page 51), and maintained that advange to a lesser degree in the end-test mean scores (Table XIII, page 52). However, in neither instance was the difference statistically significant.

Summary. Data contributed by the three tests demonstrated that the conventional classes at the junior level made slightly greater growth in each test, but that at the sophomore level the experimental classes made somewhat greater progress. This condition was indicated clearly when statistics summarizing the mean scores of the combined groups were presented and in all cases showed a marked similarity. On the basis of the evidence supplied by the end tests, the

TABLE XI

COMPARISON OF GROWTH IN LITERARY COMPREHENSION AND APPRECIATION MADE BY GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES DURING ONE SEMESTER AS REVEALED BY COOPERATIVE LITERARY COMPREHENSION AND APPRECIATION TEST, PROVISIONAL FORMS R, T*

Groups	No	Mean		Standard deviation		Difference in end-test mean	Standard error of difference	Critical Ratio
		Pre-test	End-test	Pre-test	End-test			
Junior groups								
Conventional	89	47.98	48.89	8.35	7.36	1.83	1.20	1.53
Experimental	90	46.94	47.06	8.44	8.85			
Soph. groups								
Conventional	88	46.96	47.41	9.32	8.96	.79	1.26	.63
Experimental	95	45.77	46.20	11.19	8.24			

*The scores presented in this table are scaled scores, which were converted from raw scores by means of tables furnished in the Manual of Directions, Cooperative Test Service.

TABLE XII

COMPARISON OF SCORES IN LITERARY COMPREHENSION AND APPRECIATION MADE BY COMBINED GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES AT BEGINNING OF SEMESTER AS REVEALED BY COOPERATIVE LITERARY COMPREHENSION AND APPRECIATION TEST, PROVISIONAL FORM R*

Groups	No.	Mean Pre-Test	Standard deviation	Difference in mean	Standard error of difference	Critical Ratio
Junior and sophomore groups Conventional	177	47.47	8.81			
Junior and sophomore groups Experimental	185	46.34	9.96	1.13	.99	1.14

*The scores presented in this table are scaled scores, which were converted from raw scores by means of tables furnished in the Manual of Directions, Cooperative Test Service.

TABLE XIII

COMPARISON OF GROWTH IN LITERARY COMPREHENSION AND APPRECIATION MADE BY COMBINED GROUPS USING CONVENTIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES DURING ONE SEMESTER AS REVEALED BY COOPERATIVE LITERARY COMPREHENSION AND APPRECIATION TEST, PROVISIONAL FORM T*

Groups	No.	Mean End-Test	Standard deviation	Difference in Mean	Standard error of difference	Critical Ratio
Junior and sophomore groups Conventional	177	48.15	8.23			
Junior and sophomore groups Experimental	185	47.65	8.56	.50	.88	.57

*The scores presented in this table are scaled scores, which were converted from raw scores by means of tables furnished in the Manual of Directions, Cooperative Test Service.

difference in growth in every case was not statistically significant.

CHAPTER V

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the procedure. Both limitations and advantages were found in the physical aspects of this study. Limitations which were evident included those of time and scope. Since the study was conducted in one high school, the investigation necessarily utilized teaching and student personnel from that school. The time equivalent of one semester, beginning with the tenth week of the school year and continuing through the twenty-eighth week, was chosen for the study, since interruptions in the class schedule occur more frequently near the beginning and the ending of the school year. Thus, limiting the experimental period eliminated the more irregular first and fourth quarters. Limiting the study to sophomores and juniors stabilized the groups to the extent that of the original 192 juniors and 187 sophomores selected for the investigation, 179 juniors and 183 sophomores were used in the study.

Definite advantages found in this study included the high degree of similarity of equated student and teacher groups, and the lack of apparent variables such as diversified community or school background so often present in studies of greater scope. As stated previously, the time limit of one semester seemed no serious handicap; in fact, the selection of the second and third quarters for the

period of experimentation gave conciseness and stability to the study.

Appraisal of the data. On the basis of the data collected from the three standardized tests, evaluating those objectives commonly associated with conventional English courses, students taught by the experimental teaching method achieved fully as much progress as those taught by conventional methods. Neither the conventional nor the experimental groups at either the sophomore or the junior levels demonstrated any significant growth evaluated in terms of stated objectives that could be attributed to the superiority of either teaching method.

Recommendations and implications. Observation indicated that students in conventional English classes seemed to be using their time less efficiently because of an apparent excessive amount of time spent on drills in the mechanics of oral and written English. Teachers of English using conventional teaching methods did not take advantage of a functional approach to subject-matter through student experiences and problems to develop language skills economically.

In addition, evidence noted during observation of the conventional approach suggested the hypothesis that teachers using that approach often neglect opportunities to develop in their students the ability to think critically, to develop

interests of social significance, and to improve their power to deal effectively with present-day problems. Further research is needed to prove or disprove this hypothesis.

Thus, evidence from the tests in silent reading, English, and literature comprehension and appreciation seemed to indicate that the experimental method of teaching English did not detract from the usually measured outcomes; rather, the use of the experimental method of teaching increased the time available for development of other phases of the English program.

The comparable growth in English made by the conventional and experimental groups at both the sophomore and junior levels indicated that the problems or topical approach could well be tried more extensively in English instruction. The experimental method seemed to demonstrate an effectiveness in achieving comparable growth in commonly accepted English objectives through a functional approach as opposed to the conventional method of effecting growth through emphasis on isolated skills. Two major implications were suggested by observation of both teaching approaches.

First, the experimental teaching method recognizes the importance and necessity of meaningful practice and drill. English teachers using the conventional approach with successful results in terms of stated objectives no doubt should retain many or all of their methods of teaching. Many of

these teachers have devised sound teaching methods which achieve worthy objectives that even today may remain immensurable. The evidence presented does not warrant the abandonment of conventional teaching methods which have proved successful in the pattern of the curriculum; rather, the data stressed the need for re-evaluating teaching proficiency in terms of measured outcomes.

The second implication recognizes that the complexity of modern social forces demands the most effective uses of the democratic educative process if teachers are to educate the youth of America to accept the responsibility of an individual in a democracy. Therefore, more comprehensive aims and objectives of English must be constructed if the language arts are to develop in students the ability to think critically and to communicate competently with other members of society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

Aiken, Wilford M., The Story of the Eight-Year Study. Vol. I, 157 pp. Commission on the Relation of School and College, Progressive Education Association, Adventure in American Education, 5 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942.

Broening, Angela M., Chairman, Conducting Experiences in English. A Report of the National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 8. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, 1939. 394 pp.

Burros, Oscar K., editor, The Third Mental Measurements Yearbook. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1949. 1047 pp.

Commission on the Relation of School and College, Progressive Education Association, Adventure in American Education. 5 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942-1943.

Commission on the Relation of School and College, Progressive Education Association, Thirty Schools Tell Their Story. Vol. V, 802 pp. Adventure in American Education, 5 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943.

Douglass, Harl R., editor, Education for Life Adjustment. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950. 491 pp.

Garrett, Henry E., Statistics in Psychology and Education. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1945. 493 pp.

Giles, H. H., S. P. McCutchen, and A. N. Zechiel, Exploring the Curriculum. Vol. II, 362 pp. Commission on the Relation of School and College, Progressive Education Association, Adventure in American Education, 5 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942.

Hatfield, W. Wilbur, chairman, An Experience Curriculum in English. A Report of the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 4. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, 1935. 323 pp.

Kaulfers, Walter V., Four Studies in Teaching Grammar from the Socio-Psychological Viewpoint. Stanford University, California: The Stanford Bookstore, distributors, 1945. 47 pp.

Kennedy, Arthur G., English Usage. The National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 15. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, 1942. 166 pp.

Pooley, Robert, Teaching English Usage. The National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 16. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, 1946. 265 pp.

Quillen, I. James, and Lavone A. Hanna, Education for Social Competence. New York: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1948. 572 pp.

Roberts, Holland D., Walter V. Kaulfers, and Grayson N. Kefauver, editors, English for Social Living. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Incorporated, 1943. 366 pp.

Taba, Hilda, director, Reading Ladders for Human Relations. Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools, Work in Progress Series, Revised and Enlarged Edition. Washington, D.C.; American Council on Education, 1949. 115 pp.

Weeks, Mary Ruth, chairman, A Correlated Curriculum. A Report of the Committee on Correlation of the National Council of Teachers of English, English Monograph No. 5. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, 1936. 326 pp.

Wrightstone, J. Wayne, Appraisal of Experimental High School Practices. New York City: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1936. 194 pp.

B. PERIODICAL ARTICLES

Burton, Dwight L., "There's Always a Book for You," The English Journal, 38:371-75, September, 1949.

Dilley, Lois Anne, "Discussion: A New Technique for the Classroom," The English Journal, 36:412-19, October, 1947.

Goldberg, Murray A., "Developing Democratic Responsibility Through Discussions of Controversial Issues," The English Journal, 34:66-71, February, 1945.

Henry, George H., "Our Best English Unit," The English Journal, 36:356-62, September, 1947.

Kight, Stanford S., and John M. Mickelson, "Problem vs. Subject," The Clearing House, 24:3-7, September, 1949.

Loban, Walter, "No Way Around," The English Journal, 38:259-65, May, 1949.

Pooley, Robert C., "English in the Coming High School," The English Journal, 37:284-91, June, 1948.

Sheridan, Marion C., "Equilibrium with Variations," The English Journal, 38:125-30, March, 1949.

Smith, Dora V., "Basic Considerations in Curriculum-making in the Language Arts," The English Journal, 37:115-26, March, 1948.

C. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

Borst, Evan, chairman, Modern Problems. Mimeographed course of study for senior social studies, Lodi Union High School, Lodi, California, 1938. 32 pp.

Hart, F. W., and L. H. Peterson, A Report of a Survey of Public Education in the Lodi Union High School District. Mimeographed survey report, The University of California, Berkeley, California, 1948. 280 pp.

Hughes, Richard L., chairman, Basic Skills for English. Mimeographed course of study for English, Lodi Union High School, Lodi, California, 1942. 25 pp.